

REMARKS

This paper is submitted in reply to the final Office Action dated June 22, 2004, and to the Advisory Action dated November 29, 2004. A request for a three month extension of time is being submitted concurrently herewith, and therefore, the period for response extends up to and includes December 22, 2004. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

In the subject Office Action, claims 1-2, 5-8, 13-18, 20-22, 25-31, and 33-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacNaughton et al. in view of Suzuki et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,932,270 to Abraham et al. Furthermore, the Examiner rejected claims 3-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacNaughton et al. in view of Suzuki in further view of Abraham in further view of the Yahoo! "Chat Comp: Lobby" reference. In addition, claims 9, and 11-12 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacNaughton et al. in view of Kavner. The Examiner did indicate, however, that claims 19 and 32 were directed to allowable subject matter.

While Applicants continue to traverse the Examiners rejections, Applicants have now amended claim 32 to independent form and canceled claims 1-9, 11-18, 20-22, 25-31 and 33-36 without prejudice, leaving only claims 19 and 32 still pending in the instant application.

Claim 19 was allowed by the Examiner, and as such reaffirmance of the allowance of this claim is respectfully requested.

Claim 32 was objected to by the Examiner, but the Examiner indicated that the claim would be allowable if amended to independent form including all of the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner will note that Applicants have amended claim 32 herein to incorporate verbatim the text of base claim 25 and intervening claim 30. As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 32 is also in condition for allowance.

Page 4 of 5
Serial No. 09/247,502
Amendment After Final
Reply to Final Office Action of June 22, 2004
IBM Docket RO998190
WH&E IBM/72
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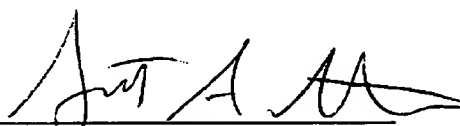
Applicants also respectfully submit that the amendments made herein do not raise any new issues, and are therefore properly entered after final. The amendment to claim 32, in particular, does not change the scope of the claim whatsoever, given that it has been amended simply to incorporate all of the limitations of its base and intervening claims. The remaining amendments are merely cancellations of rejected claims. As a result, no new issues are raised, and entry of the amendments after final is proper under 37 CFR 1.116 and MPEP §714.13.

As a final matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for the consideration in granting brief telephonic interviews on December 14 and 16, 2004. In the interviews, proposed amendments to the claims to overcome the new issues the Examiner apparently thought were raised by the prior Amendment After Final were discussed.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are therefore respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the foregoing, or which might otherwise further this case onto allowance, the Examiner may contact the undersigned at (513) 241-2324. Moreover, if any other charges or credits are necessary to complete this communication, please apply them to Deposit Account 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,

17 DEC 2004
Date


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Page 5 of 5
Serial No. 09/247,502
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Reply to Final Office Action of June 22, 2004
IBM Docket RO998190
WH&E IBM/72
K:\ibrd\72\Second Amendment After Final.wpd